

~~TOP SECRET~~

MCO

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*Memorandum*



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 0600  
17 March 1965

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
FURTHER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION  
CONTAINED HEREIN IS NOT AUTHORIZED

25X1

~~TOP SECRET~~

84

**Page Denied**

25X1

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
17 March 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam as of 0600 EST

Results of the US Air Strike on Phu Qui

1. Additional post-strike photography of Phu Qui taken on 16 March indicates that damage was more severe than was revealed earlier. The preliminary photography was made while smoke still partly obscured the target.

2. It now appears that there were 55 buildings in the target complex. Eighteen of the buildings were completely destroyed and 11 were severely damaged.

Communist Military Developments

3. No unusual Chinese Communist or Soviet military movements which can be directly related to the Vietnamese situation have been detected during the past 24 hours.

25X1

5. Hanoi radio claims in an international broadcast today that hundreds of thousands of youths--30,000 in Hanoi alone--have applied to join the army. These are said to include demobilized soldiers.

6. According to press reports from Saigon, a traveler returning from Hanoi has stated that the North Vietnamese capital is engaged in evacuating children and digging a network of bomb shelters.

25X1

Communist Political Developments

7. There is still no authoritative Soviet or Chinese Communist comment on the 15 March US air strike against the DRV, and their sparse propaganda coverage of the Vietnam situation contains no new themes.

8. One Moscow commentary on 15 March again asserted that the "barbaric attacks on the DRV" have not shaken the steadfastness of the Viet Cong fighters, and that the Soviet government is taking "practical measures" to strengthen the security and defense of North Vietnam. 25X1

10. President Ayub's public references in Peiping advocating negotiations were ignored by the Chinese and the joint communique on 7 March made no mention of Vietnam. Peiping's official statements since then have reiterated the unyielding Chinese position that removal of US forces from South Vietnam is the "only road to peace." The French Foreign Office, moreover, reportedly sees signs of still greater intransigence in Peiping.

11. Peiping continues its efforts to make propaganda capital out of the 4 March anti-American student demonstrations in Moscow. In a protest delivered to the Soviet Embassy in Peiping yesterday and publicized simultaneously, the Chinese "categorically rejected" Moscow's 12 March note justifying Soviet actions and accused the USSR of attempting to "reverse right and wrong." Peiping reiterated its charges of police brutality and once again demanded Soviet apologies.

12. Hanoi's radio, in a domestic broadcast on 16 March, claimed that many youths in foreign countries had volunteered to come to Vietnam to join in the battle "against the US imperialists." This statement appears designed in part to bolster North Vietnamese

morale by indicating that the North Vietnamese do not stand alone in their battle. The broadcast alleged that youths in the Soviet Union, Communist China, Burma, Cuba and Indonesia had volunteered for service in Vietnam.

13. The Hanoi statement could also be intended to serve as propaganda groundwork for any eventual decision to use an actual "volunteer" force in North Vietnam.

#### Viet Cong Developments

14. The Chairman of the Viet Cong's Liberation Front has called for a "day of unity against the Americans" to be commemorated on 19 March. This appeal, directed mainly to urban dwellers in South Vietnam, urges all elements of the urban population to "open wide the struggle movement" and to "continuously attack the enemy."

15. Although this call is undoubtedly designed more for its propaganda value than as a directive for action, it is possible that the Viet Cong may attempt some spectacular terrorist act against US personnel in order to give some substance to their "day of unity."

16. The clearest statement yet on the Liberation Front attitude toward negotiations on Vietnam was contained in a 13 March broadcast from Hanoi, quoting the remarks at a press conference by the head of the Front delegation at the recent Indochinese People's Conference in Phnom Penh. He stated that "the NFLSV stand concerning the convening of a Geneva type conference on Vietnam requires first of all, that the US imperialists must withdraw all their troops, military personnel and weapons, and other war materiel from South Vietnam and let the South Vietnamese people settle their own internal affairs." This statement is the strongest indication since the air strikes began that Vietnamese Communists will insist on the withdrawal of US troops as a precondition for negotiations.

#### South Vietnamese Political and Military Developments

17. No major political or military developments have been reported in South Vietnam during the past 24 hours.

18. The final contingent of the South Korean force, consisting of engineering, transportation and security troops, arrived in Saigon yesterday. The total force numbers 2,000.

**TOP SECRET**

↑

**TOP SECRET**